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THE EFFICIENCY OF VIOLENCE
— Gunnar D. Kumlien

THE

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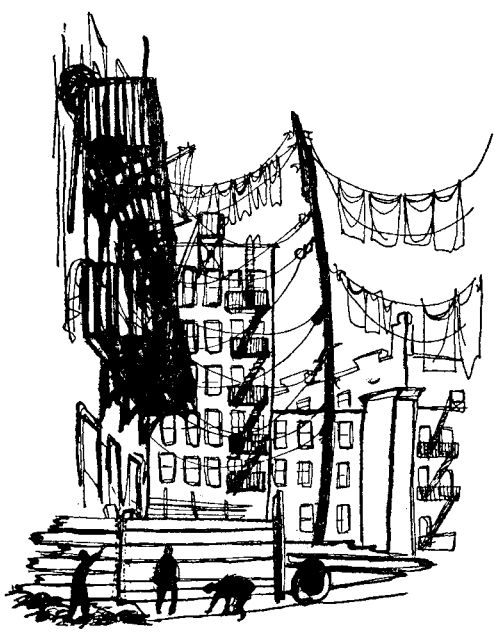

The Housing Scandal

by Michael Harrington

Always Time for a Change

by Jerome G. Kerwin

Volume LX, No. 13 July 2, 1954 Twenty Cent

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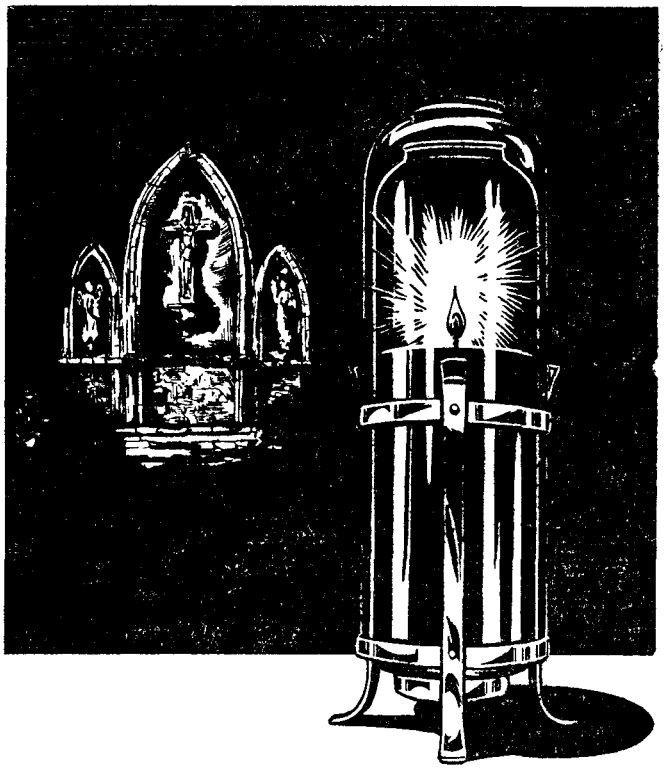

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THE

Commonweal

week by week

EUROPE'S DISAFFECTION

IT is curious that the nub of the Communist problem in Western Europe lies in France and Italy, for despite their strong sense of history and a common Latin culture these two nations differ in many vital respects. France is relatively well off in natural resources and boasts an economy in which industry and agriculture are well-balanced; it should not be an insuperable problem to support her stable, slowly increasing population. Italy, on the other hand, is hard put simply to feed her continually increasing millions, considering her lack of mineral resources and scarcity of arable land. With the French, politics is a passion; the worldly-wise Italians often find it hard to take politics, or politicians, seriously.

There are important temperamental and other differences between the two peoples. Yet in each country the Communists are able to marshal some five million votes in election after election. This is, of course, a tribute to the flexibility and skill of their respective Communist leaders. (And it must be added in passing that the recent complaints of the French CP leadership about the sharp drop in Party membership and the lack of ideological interest among French youth is not seriously reflected when it actually comes to mustering votes.)

However much the French worker differs from his Italian counterpart in the matter of industriousness, what the two often have in common is a resentment against a capitalism which they know from hard personal experience. When the worst paid and the better paid vote Communist in each nation, it is primarily to protest against poor living standards, insecurity and the lack of any real opportunity to better their own status.

Because the source of this resentment lies so deep it is impossible to overcome this attitude, which so weakens France and Italy from within, short of a radical transformation of their current economic set-up. It has long been known, for instance, that the Marshall Plan aided governments and businesses but failed to make its presence felt directly in the living standards of the men and women employed by French and Italian enterprises. American aid tended to win little popular credit for keeping the respective economies going during the immediate postwar years. Such sums, in fact, tended to solidify private enterprise in those countries in a system of restricted production for a market already parceled out. Low wages, which prevented the workers themselves from acquiring the products of French and Italian industry, tended thereby to be perpetuated. American capitalism continued to be for them—with the help of Moscow propaganda—a faithful if bigger counterpart of the system of which they were the resentful victims.

MEANWHILE both countries have continued to suffer from the dollar gap despite increased tourism, off-shore purchases of European arms for American forces and sizable direct American economic aid. At the present moment Italy is embarking upon a new effort to stimulate her foreign trade, an effort which would involve more imports of American finished products (not foodstuffs) in order to develop sales of Italian products in exchange. Yet such increased exports if attained can hardly solve the basic problem.

To what extent is it possible to export the American version of private enterprise capitalism for all its faults? Europeans have long been averse to mass production. They have rejected the idea of standardization; they have rebelled against the supposed and actual psychological effects of the relentless conveyor belt and the factory assembly line. They have accused Americans of materialism of the rankest sort, of a willingness to sacrifice all manner of personal and social values for the sake of material comforts. They have taken pleasure in contrasting the cultivated and considerate European art of living with the restless, rootless, materialistic American standard. They have noted the extent to which the individual American has become a passive spectator, with his big-time sporting events and canned amusements.

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One of the most effective ways of confronting this chronic lack of sympathy for the United States is to admit the validity in many of these criticisms. Another is to develop effective ways of manifesting American appreciation for the human and Christian values for which Europe stands—through the dissemination of books and periodicals embodying such views and a much more extensive exchange of students, journalists, members of the professions, union members, farmers and business men.

This in turn would require continuous self-examinations as to the soundness of our own institutions. It would also demand considerable more evidence than we give at present of our genuine concern for the well-being of other peoples by such means as a wholehearted expansion of our technical assistance programs. (It is just reported, for instance, that an American expenditure of forty thousand dollars for hybrid corn shipped to Europe has produced an increase of forty million dollars in that continent's agricultural ouput.) Advances in technological developments now make it possible in many industries to produce more efficiently through the skilled operation of small machines than by mass production methods. High-wage private enterprise is not inevitably synonymous with soulless mass production.

Once the peoples of France and Italy, and of Europe generally, have a better understanding of the American system (including its real shortcomings), they will be less likely to view our domestic and worldwide political difficulties with an eye that is unfriendly to begin with. And if at the same time they are stimulated by the manifold American contacts to develop the sort of economy that does not condemn the European worker to a life which offers so bare a prospect for himself and his family, Europe may develop new internal strength. If in addition there is continent-wide economic cooperation to provide a large domestic market and the various nations achieve a new degree of working together for their mutual benefit in many fields, it is still possible that Western Europe will integrate a revived Germany and become an independent political entity of considerable strength and resilience—particularly if such is the explicit and consistent objective of these United States.

NEXT WEEK

FRANCIS J. KEENAN writes from Washington of the battle to put over the "Quick-Rate-Increase" bill.

"Hardly had the President's veto been over-ridden when the whole wondrously effective and intricately organized railroad lobby went back to work. Power, having an unhappy way of dissipating with non-use, had to be stoked up. So—through their own many publications, their heavy national advertising program, the cooperative "Railroad Hour" radio series, and the endless flow of "canned" editorials and "news" stories picked up by small-town papers—the line was peddled: railroads were being severely hurt by the inflation because of their inability, under ICC regulations, to meet rising costs with adequate rate increases. And the small army of cheerful, charming men daily left the headquarters of the Association of American Railroads to hover about the corridors and offices of the ICC, the Senate, and the House of Representatives with the same message. . . ."

IN THE SHADOW OF THE VOLCANO

IN 1945 there occurred in Guatemala a revolution which overthrew the dictatorship of Jorge Ubico. In the confusion which followed years of political authoritarianism, the only party which maintained a strong and purposeful course was the Communist Party. Miserable economic conditions had paralled the primitive political development of the country, and the Communist platform of social improvement and land reform appealed strongly to the Indian peasants who make up some sixty-five per cent of the population.

Guatemala is predominantly agricultural; the leading crop is coffee (which makes up sixty per cent of the country's exports), the next is bananas (thirty per cent of the export total). In 1949 ninety-two per cent of all exports went to the United States, and we supplied the Guatemalans with seventy-four per cent of their imports. This northernmost and most populous of the Central American states has been a field for the activities of the United Fruit Company, a firm whose history of operations in Central America has not always been so innocent as the fluting song of Chiquita Banana.

In the political conflict and confusion which followed the revolution of 1945 the United States did little to help the moderate democratic forces within that country. And many Guatemalan moderates, notably those who eventually came to power, succumbed to the lure of the popular front. The Communists and the Government came to have so close a relationship that if a person were anti-Communist he was considered unpatriotic. By 1954 the Communists exercised a virtual veto over the government.

Then the sleeping giant awoke. The United States began a campaign against the Communist-influ-

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enced government which, in spite of the grudging support we won at Caracas, was widely interpreted in South America as unwarranted interference in the workings of a government which had gained power through constitutional means.

But the Government of Guatemala did not exercise its power with quite so much respect for constitutional processes. There began a series of political arrests, and there was suppression of criticism and political discussion. The arms shipment incident occurred, proving the enthusiastic interest the Soviet Union and its satellites were taking in the situation in Guatemala, and proving that the Cominform had a firm toehold in Central America. The State Department, alarmed, increased its pressure on Guatemala. Mr. Dulles made his clumsy demand that ships bound for Guatemala submit to United States search. Nearly all the maritime nations justifiably refused to submit on principle, although, most, like Great Britain, agreed to take action themselves to supervise the ships sailing under their own flags. (But the Manchester *Guardian* commented, "Who can talk of colonialism now?")

And then came the rebellion. Guatemalan exiles invaded the country from Honduras and bombed the capital city and ports on the Caribbean and Pacific coasts. At this writing the invasion continues, reports are thoroughly contradictory, and the political character of the revolutionary army is unknown. One may hope that the fighting will be brief (although it seems very doubtful that the resolution of the UN Security Council will have much effect), that moderate forces will emerge with control of the country, and that a non-Communist democratic government, sensitive to the urgent needs of the people, will be formed. All these wishes, however, are long shots. Probably the most realistic hope is that Guatemala will be able to go back to the situation of 1945 and try again, and that liberal non-Communist forces will be given encouragement by the United States, a country which even now, long after the time of the Marine "pacifications" in Central America, continues to have an enormous influence over the economic—and thus the political—fate of small Central American nations.

GOING DOWN

TRADITIONALLY, the popular fear of a military man as national leader has been that he will lead the nation way from the path of peace, and that he will be more in love with the sword and the saber than the average U. S. citizen chooses to be. It is one of the odd paradoxes of the Eisenhower Administration that concern over the military establishment has been in the opposite direction. Elected on an end-of-the-war economy platform, the Administration has lived up to its pledge with frightening enthusiasm. In the face of a deteriorating world situation, military expenditures have been cut back in a way that seems dangerous to many people, including the editors of this magazine.

Current plans of the Administration call for a cut in Army strength from the present twenty divisions to seventeen by June of next year. A recent effort by a small group of Senate Democrats to force the Administration not to cut below nineteen divisions has been beaten, at least for the time being. In the course of debate over the measure, the issues were spelled out. Senator Albert Gore of Tennessee charged that the Administration's cut-down military budget is a "desperate gamble with the chances of having peace instead of war." Representing the Administration forces, Senator Homer Ferguson of Michigan declared that the "new look" military budget gives the nation "the greatest protection possible within the limits of a balanced economy."

Admittedly, decisions on matters of national defense are not easy. But on the basis of the facts available, we would align ourselves in this argument with Senator Gore and the critics of the cut-back in national defense. It seems to us that the Administration has put entirely too much emphasis on tax-cuts, slashing military spending to fit its idea of what the budget should be, rather than figuring the budget in terms of the needs of national defense. We see nothing in the international situation that would warrant such a gamble—especially when, as in this case, the amount that is saved is relatively negligible when compared to the potential losses.

MENDES-FRANCE

THE new French cabinet is the first in years to which the adjective "new" can be applied with real meaning. M. Mendes-France advocates economic reform at home, political reform in North Africa, and a fast settlement in Indochina. He is known as a man of great intellect and of integrity. His fundamental appraisal of France's problem: that France is overextended, to put it simply, seems like the appraisal of a man who is willing to say unpopular things and to support hard measures.

If France were not a key piece in this crossword puzzle called the cold war, the Mendes-France program would be one of promise, and of great interest to all the friends of France. And even in

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world context, M. Mendes-France's proposals, while they are dangerous to the Western coalition, offer at least new hope to a France which is very close to demoralization.

The new Premier promises to win an honorable settlement in Indochina before July 20. He states that if honorable terms cannot be achieved, he will resign and pass on to his successor a strengthened military force capable of fighting on. His definition of "honorable terms" is, of course, unknown as yet. He is noncommittal about the European Army treaty, which his party tends to favor but towards which he has been cool. He speaks of altering the treaty—which in its present form has been passed by all the other EDC nations save Italy. And he promises radical economic reform.

M. Mendes-France seems confident that he will be able to perform a feat at Geneva which no one else has come near doing. He seems confident that the Communists will give him concessions that they would not make to M. Bidault. Why they are to do this, when by stalling until July 20 they can thoroughly disrupt the French nation and still conquer most if not all of Viet Nam, is not clear. But M. Mendes-France has one unique factor of strength which will be behind him at Geneva: the remarkably united support of the French people. And he has one more familiar source of strength: the unspoken threat that if he too is rebuffed, France will unite with the Anglo-Americans in drastic action to hold Southeast Asia.

SHEEPSKINS AND BABIES

POPULATION experts have long thrown up their hands in horror at the reproductive pattern of American college graduates, who in the past have had far fewer children than other sections of the population, despite generally better economic conditions. Recently, however, there have been signs to indicate that a change in attitude on family life is taking place within this group, and now a report of the Population Reference Bureau of Milton, Mass., further strengthens this belief.

According to this report, the reproduction rate of college graduates has increased every year since 1946, and men now out of college for ten years have almost as many children as those out twenty-five years. This increase is believed to reflect improved economic conditions which provide a better chance to establish homes and encourage a tendency to earlier marriage. Whatever the reasons for the change, the trend to large families among college graduates is certainly a healthy one, and overdue.

AMENDING THE PAST

RECENT political controversy provides many examples of a radical approach to the facts of the past. A good example of this new approach is currently provided by the House committee which is investigating the tax-free foundations. There is, of course, no reason in the world why such foundations should be exempt from Congressional investigation. Over the years, a few causes may have been aided by foundation money which the fund administrators would disapprove today. And although it is true that the tax-free foundations have contributed mightily to American education, there may have been certain harmful effects too, as in the question of centralizing research projects. On all such points, the tax-free foundations might well be subject to a critical examination. But such sober evaluation seems remote from the minds of those responsible for the committee in question.

From all appearances, the hearings of this House group seem intended to establish a thesis rather than to carry out an inquiry with any degree of objectivity. Those responsible for the hearings on the tax-free foundations seem to have embraced the "conspiracy" approach to history with a vengeance. All the transformations of the last few decades—the change in relationship between government and business, the initiation of income taxes, the growth of powerful labor unions, popular support for programs of social security—such things have developed, according to this view, not because of the day-to-day and year-to-year efforts to meet the growing complexity of modern life but as a result of socialistic propaganda. Because the tax-free foundations play an important—though by no means dominant—role in education and hence in public opinion, they find themselves on trial for what is termed promotion of socialistic ideas.

If all this seems far-fetched to the reader, we might as well say right now that it strikes us the same way. The American people have faced some unpleasant facts in the last few decades and have made some difficult choices, not always eagerly. But it is foolish to pretend that the problems were not real or that the choices did not have to be made. Long ago, psychologists accepted the fact that men tend to eliminate from their memories the unpleasant details of past experiences, and often enough this unconscious trick of the mind saves men from living through harrowing experiences again and again. But when this harmless trick of the individual memory becomes an attempt to tailor the hard and sometimes unpleasant facts of history to fit present prejudices, we are coming dangerously close to national psychosis.

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The Housing Scandal

"THE STINKING, DISGRACEFUL MESS EXISTING IN ALMOST EVERY CITY — THE PREVALENCE OF SLUM LIVING."

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

SLUMS, like sin, are a reality which members of Congress never tire of decrying. Yet, as in the case of sin, not being in favor of the reality does not necessarily commit one to a positive course of action against it. For years now, Congress has seen to it through riders on appropriation bills that nothing is done and in recent months, when the politics of housing again made news, it was even more depressing than usual, for positive setbacks had taken place.

When Albert M. Cole, Housing and Home Finance Administrator in the Eisenhower Government, told the United States Chamber of Commerce that a "far worse scandal" than the grafting in the FHA was the "stinking, disgraceful mess existing in almost every city—the prevalence of slum living," he was not, as one might conclude from the vehemence of his expression, arguing in favor of a program to do away with those slums. He was proposing totally inadequate federal housing—"if" business did not do the job. But if this did not place Cole to the left on the housing question, it did place him in the enlightened center, so dismal and complete is opposition to government action in this area.

Yet, almost everyone agreed with the terrible description of the "stinking, disgraceful mess" which Cole had made. In December of 1953, President Eisenhower's Advisory Committee had called for an extension of the Public Housing program. A report at the National Housing Conference this June predicted that at the present level of construction there would be more substandard housing in the United States in 1970 than existed in 1950!

What is the translation of these statistics into reality? I can fill them in out of my own experience, and every American city-dweller should be able to do the same. It means the tenements I saw in St. Louis, Missouri, where thousands of people live in the middle of a modern city without indoor sanitation. In a public school there, where I worked briefly, it gave a child a sense of status to have had a rat-bite reported in the *Globe-Democrat*. Or it means what a New York real-estate man told me: that he fixed up a multiple family apartment in Harlem, cleaned it, painted it, only to discover that it was filthy within a matter of weeks. "When the family next door tosses its garbage out the window," he remarked, "what incentive do people have to keep their own place clean?" In human terms, it means a monstrous assault on the person.

This was the reality—as obvious as sin—which existed when the question of public housing came up on the floor of the Congress and when the scandals in the FHA became known. Against it, the Democratic Party urged a renewal of the Truman program of 810,000 units in six years, but then the issue of racial segregation came to the fore, and the Democratic attack disintegrated. The Eisenhower Republicans asked for 35,000 units a year for the next four years—a program which CIO Housing Director Ben Fischer characterized as "a drop in the bucket"—but even this modest plan met violent opposition. At present writing, the question of whether there will be *any* public housing at all is not completely decided.

Over the deliberations on this matter there brooded two issues, one directly related to the problem, and the other tragically peripheral to it: that of the scandals in the FHA, and the question of racial segregation. To understand what happened to public housing, it is necessary to know the development of these two issues.

THE first American government intervention in the field of housing occurred in 1892 when Congress appropriated twenty thousand dollars to investigate slum conditions. Between that time and the New Deal, there was little real action by Washington other than the building of some defense housing in World War I.

Then, under the New Deal, the main outlines of America's present housing policy were legislated into law. The Roosevelt approach had two aspects: pump priming and public housing. It should be emphasized that it was the first approach, that of pump priming, which led to the FHA scandal. At no point was public housing involved in any way in the disclosals of "wind-

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falls". If there was any villain in the piece, it was private construction interests.

Two parts of the housing program were at the bottom of the scandal. The most important was Section 608 of the Federal Housing Act, a measure which was passed in 1941 and which expired in 1950. When Section 608 was passed it had two major objectives: relief of the housing shortage and priming the pump for private construction.

Under Section 608, the Government undertook to insure private construction projects up to ninety per cent. At the time this provision was passed, it was little used because of World War II restrictions on building. But after the war, it became the basis for what *Architectural Forum* referred to as an "apartment boom floated on public risk and private profit. . . ." And as long ago as 1949, Leon Goodman, of the National Housing Committee of the CIO, predicted that Section 608 would turn into the kind of gold mine which it became.

A typical transaction under Section 608 went like this (the example was given by a Government housing spokesman): a builder would receive a loan of $8,380,-500 on an estimated project. The actual cost would be $3,890,871.13. The "windfall" to the dealer—would be $4,489,628.87. The result was astronomical profit-taking on the part of private construction companies. On April 20, T. Coleman Andrews testified that in the case of 1,149 mortgages—over sixteen per cent of those in existence—an excess of sixty-five million dollars had been paid out over cost. By the end of April, this figure was revised to eighty million, and in May, the total—from Section 608, and under Title One—was estimated at five hundred million!

One subsidiary aspect of this kind of deal was that the tenants were charged rents on the basis of the estimated, and not the actual, cost. How many millions of dollars in excess rents were charged is impossible to calculate. Yet, this multi-million dollar business was not in violation of federal law.

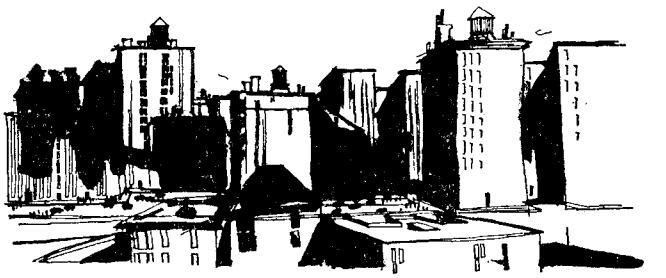
The other type of transaction which figured in the scandal was under Title One of the Act which provided loans for home improvements—up to $2,500 for single units and to $10,000 for multi-family dwellings. These loans could be used (and were used) to install barbecue pits, burglar-alarm systems, swimming pools, etc. A small army of "home improvement" salesmen—called the "suede shoe boys" during the Congressional investigation of their activities—made use of this provision to make a tidy profit for themselves.

In both cases, involving Section 608 and Title One, public housing was not at issue. What was at issue was the peculiar practice of priming the pump in the midst of a boom, and indeed the entire principle of "public risk and private profit." Such transactions are possible wherever this pattern prevails. One wonders if there might not be similar revelations some day from the Atomic Energy Commission if a public monopoly is guaranteed to private—and profit-making—business.

The "crime" involved in these transactions was the purely legal, white-collar type of transgression which results, not from government intervention, but from the intervention of government *and* private business. As usual, a few were accused of bribe-taking but no one spoke too much about bribe-giving.

IF the FHA scandals did not involve public housing, why did the program have such a hard time in Congress? The answer involves both personal and public tragedy. It centers around the question of racial segregation.

The Truman housing program was passed in 1949. It called for the construction of 810,000 units within the next six years. Yet each year the foes of public housing were able to hamstring the law by placing riders on appropriation bills. Between 1949 and 1952,



only 187,000 units were actually contracted—a little more than a year's quota under the original legislation. In 1953, Congress attempted to stop the entire program.

In the Senate, the fight for a return to the aims of the Truman program was led by Senator Burnett Maybank of South Carolina who had long been known as an outspoken advocate of public housing. The Eisenhower Republicans countered with a four-year program which called for 140,000 units—or 35,000 units a year. In the House, opponents of public housing were able to muster considerable strength, and moved to kill all public housing. One rider did pass, however. Offered by Representative McCormack of Massachusetts, it provided that "subversives" should be barred from federal housing.

Then on May 24, 1954, the Supreme Court of the United States continued its historic assault on racism by refusing to overturn the lower court in the case of the Housing Authority of the City and County of San Francisco *v.* Banks. By this action, the Supreme Court upheld the ruling that segregation in federal housing violated the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Thus, by judicial process, a result which had failed every time in the legislature was achieved.

The repercussions were immediate. On June 3, 1954,

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Senator Maybank made a tragic statements on the floor of the United States Senate. He said:

"I must oppose my own amendment to the housing law and thereby abandon a fight to which my energies and devotion have been dedicated ever since the first public housing was built in my own State, and the time I was appointed to the Public Works Administration under the Roosevelt Administration. . . ."

By this stroke, the advocates of public housing did not simply lose one man, important as he may have been to their cause. They lost an entire bloc of votes, those of the Southern Democrats who generally follow the New Deal line on all domestic policies—except those which in any way threaten racial segregation. The politics of housing had run square into one of the few real political absolutes in the United States, that no Southerner will support any measure which calls for even the relaxation of segregation.

At this point, liberals—Douglas, Lehman, Morse, Neely, Symington and Humphrey—offered their own program, a compromise calling for the construction of 75,000 units a year. But the result was foregone. With the opposition of both the Eisenhower Republicans and the Southern Democrats, there was no hope for their proposals.

Thus, when one considers the program of public housing in 1954, it is necessary to consider the entire question of the Southern vote on issues which involve the race question, and of the relation between housing and the recent Supreme Court decision on education.

It is obvious that the problem which accounted for Maybank's defection is not only a continuing one, but one which will intensify in the days to come. For when is a Negro child "integrated" into a white school? When he lives in the same neighborhood with whites. And when is a Negro child a man? Is it when he steps out of integrated schools into a segregated society? Here again, it is clear that the Supreme Court decisions have only begun a process. Public housing must be unsegregated, for only residential integration can make educational integration meaningful.

Given this fact, it does not seem that Maybank's move into opposition toward public housing is temporary. The gain which resulted from the Supreme Court decision on housing in San Francisco involved, as a corollary, this loss. The fact that the Court decision should still be applauded, that the principle of equality in federal housing (indeed, in all housing) is a good and necessary one, should not blind us to the gravity of its consequences as far as the politics of housing is concerned.

YET more is at stake than simply the question of the Southerners. The Eisenhower Administration is deeply involved in this defeat for public housing, and if the Maybank incident reveals the political schizophrenia of the Democratic party, the housing vote in the House of Representative demonstrates how split the Republicans are.

The announced GOP program of 35,000 units a year is terribly inadequate. The fact that even this program ran into trouble does not mean that a lesser plan should have been put forth. There is a very real value —as Harry Truman seemed to know—in formulating a piece of legislation even if its chances are slim. For such an action at least reveals the real choices. On the other hand, there is a very real possibility that the middle-of-the-roaders already regard their shoddy compromise as a piece of statesmanship. Homer Capehart certainly talked that way about the Eisenhower program.

Thus, if Congress in the end does give us next-to-nothing, 35,000 unit public housing program, this will be hailed as a victory because the alternative was precisely nothing. Yet whether the final decision is nothing or next-to-nothing, we should at least be clear on what *is* needed.

The first, and most important, point is that the problem of the slum is not isolated. The blighted area, with its crowding, its inevitable stench, its piles of refuse, infects the spirit of its people. In every big city, it means violent racial tensions, the warfare of the gaudy gangs, the terrible tragedy of narcotics addiction. Given this, a piecemeal solution may even be worse than no solution at all. You cannot destroy the slums house by house. The atmosphere of an entire neighborhood must be rooted out, a new physical community must be created.

The Truman program—810,000 units in six years—may have succeded in keeping us at the same level. But a plan of 35,000 units a year will probably not even provide housing for the people it dispossesses when the human warrens are torn down.

What is the "housing scandal" in 1954? Is it simply the practice of public risk and private money-grubbing, Section 608 and Title One, a problem to be solved by "tightening up the loopholes"? Hardly. The FHA revelations only illuminate the real scandal, the scandal of pitting the next-to-nothing of 35,000 units, or nothing at all, against the swarming fortress of tenements in every big city in the United States.

Here is the real scandal. Everyone recognizes the sin—and few will do anything but shed pious tears. Private business has demonstrated time and again that it cannot even begin to solve the problem. And in 1954, the issue of racial segregation and the deep split within both political parties has once again inhibited any real public action. The sin is a fact. It is decried, but it will continue to exist. And we shall continue to pay for it in countless degradations, day in, day out, in the slums of the United States.

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Always Time for a Change

JEROME G. KERWIN

THE American passion for the written law as a solution to any problem lives on. From Aristotle to the present, great political philosophers have emphasized the importance of the customs and disposition of the people as fundamental determinants in any commonwealth. Better a *spirit* of law-abidingness than a proliferation of laws—that has been their message. In Plato's *Republic* the heart of justice he is describing is restraint and balanced judgment, which would seem upon reflection to be primary elements in the make-up of citizens of a democratic republic. But in place of these elements, which should be almost instinctive in a democratic citizenry, we often put our faith in the inflexible, detailed regulations of the statute books.

If this tendency exhibited itself merely in the multiplication of provisions in ordinary law, which is easy to repeal, and is frequently intended to be ephemeral, it would be unfortunate enough. Yet even in this instance we forget that any law is general in its nature; equity requires that relief must be found for the exceptional case through judicial or administrative tribunals. But our weakness for solution by the detailed law goes beyond even this and extends to fundamental, or constitutional, law, and this is dangerous.

One of the first doctrines of constitutional law is that it is a kind of law that sets down *general* principles upon which all other laws and all governmental institutions are erected. It provides for conditions in the long run. In so doing, constitutional law must have the character of flexibility to meet changing conditions as they develop in the history of states. As the Supreme Court once said of the interstate commerce clause of our Constitution, it extends in its operation from the horse with its rider in stagecoach days to the most modern means of communication.

Owing to the fundamental character of constitutional law, no simple majority may bring about its change; only through a complicated procedure may it be amended. As a compilation of general principles, it is a protection for our most cherished rights and institutions; as a detailed accumulation of directions for all conceivable emergencies, it is a legal straitjacket, inviting repeal, amendment, and revision almost yearly.

Most of our state constitutions illustrate the dangers which flow from our penchant for confusing constitutional law with statute law. These documents take hundreds of pages to list hundreds of diverse provisions; their framers have taken nothing for granted. Our modern complicated social, political, and economic life is written on every page. So we find provisions on the regulation of corporations; on the "dark continent" of our confused county governments; on everything a city can, cannot, and must do, including a description of city governments and the power of their officials; on the operation of the state government, with provision for the salaries of officials, the meetings of the legislature, the passage of legislation, and what is expected of the governor; on the operation of the courts, their structure, personnel, and procedure. All this spells out the inescapable conclusion that we have little faith and confidence in the persons we choose by popular suffrage, and more than a little doubt as to the intelligence of the sovereign people.

OUR Federal Constitution, by contrast, has been a model for wise statesmen to contemplate and imitate. Outside of the first ten amendments, which for all practical purposes may be considered part of the original document, there have been twelve amendments in the hundred and sixty-five years of the life of the Constitution. One of these provided for the adoption of the "noble experiment" of Prohibition, and another provided for its hasty and unlamented departure. With the exception of this lapse into the bizarre, the amendments for the most part fall within the legitimate bounds of the subject matter of constitutional law. The Constitution has served us well because its framers realized that omniscience in foreseeing the march of future events is not granted to mortals. In the years since then, the generality and flexibility of its provisions have been our salvation.

The temptation to multiply details in the provisions of the Constitution has always been with us, as witness the thousands of proposed amendments submitted to Congress since 1789. In recent years the temptation has taken a political turn—everything done by the previous Administration that one dislikes should be prohibited forever after. If this becomes a national habit, we are in for a form of constitutional debauch.

Already one restrictive amendment has been adopted providing that no President may serve more than two

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terms, no matter what may be his qualifications, the circumstances of the times, or the popular will. Recently we have been treated to "the great debate" on the Bricker amendment, which would have deprived the President of a fundamental power belonging traditionally to the head of every nation on earth.

NOW another ill-begotten child is laid on our doorsteps: the Butler amendment. With a speed not common in the United States Senate, this amendment received a two-thirds majority before most people were aware of its existence, with the vote in the end fifty-eight in favor to nineteen against. (Perhaps the McCarthy-Army hearings or the grave international crisis caused the Senators to place all other questions in a second-class category.) Before being placed before the the legislatures of the states, the proposal must receive a two-thirds majority in the House.

This latest effort to amend the fundamental law has its roots in the late President Roosevelt's proposal to enlarge the Supreme Court by legislative act, something which lies within the competence of Congress. The proposal was made in 1937 and defeated in the same year, long before Senator Butler appeared on the Congressional horizon. But it evidently made on Mr. Butler a lasting and alarming impression, and one that has not been lessened by the definite defeat the proposal suffered. He has therefore proposed as amendments to the Constitution that:

1. The number of justices on the Supreme Court be fixed at the present number of nine.
2. That judges shall be compelled to retire at the age of seventy-five.
3. That Congress shall not have the power of limiting the appellate power of the Supreme Court in matters ordinarily coming within the jurisdiction of that Court.

TAKE the third proposition first. The Constitution now provides that the Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction in cases affecting ambassadors, other ministers, and consuls, and those in which a state shall be a party. The Congress has no power to add to or subtract from this power. Congress does have the power to regulate the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The proposed amendment seeks to set limits to the Congressional power as it affects this appellate jurisdiction of the Court.

Here is a case where flexibility is definitely required. True enough, as things now stand, Congress could evidently reduce the appellate jurisdiction of the Court to a nullity. If one thinks only in terms of extremes, however, it is also true that Congress could refuse to appropriate one cent for the executive department. What we have here is another example of the way a certain type of mind seeks to have everything spelled out in detail, to the destruction of all beneficial discretionary power; future generations will have to be satisfied with what the mid-twentieth century gives them.

There would seem to be no compelling reason for the second part. Some years ago a book was published called *Nine Old Men,* referring, of course, to the Supreme Court. Sporadically some citizens get worried about the longevity of our justices, but this has never become a matter of general concern. A judge may now voluntarily retire at full pay at the age of seventy, a special invitation, as it were, to retire if he feels the weight of his years. Yet, with the ever-increasing life-expectancy, who is to say what a person's powers will be at seventy-five? Justice Holmes was not without his wit or his wits at ninety. In the Butler proposal we have an example of amendment of the Constitution to provide against a most rare contingency—a senile judge who does not know what is good for him when leisure at full salary is put within his grasp.

The first proposition is the most noteworthy. The Constitution leaves the size of the Supreme Court to the discretion of Congress. The size of the high court was originally set at six and has been fixed at nine since the Grant administration. The framers knew that it would be folly to set a fixed figure, for no one could tell how much business the Court might be called upon to handle in the future. Senator Butler, moved by fear of "court-packing" and the ghost of a former President, has decided that no matter how much business the already over-burdened Court might have in the future, nine men will have to handle it. In order to forestall a possible evil his amendment would hamstring the Court.

This fear of discretionary power has been the prime factor behind the over-loading of our state constitutions. Considering the number of places in the Federal Constitution about which similar fears might be entertained, every good citizen might well pray that the fear-complex does take up permanent residence in Washington.

Senator Butler judges wisely: the Supreme Court may be enlarged. It is far behind its docket now. Many able students of the law would increase the number to twelve or fifteen, dividing the Court into three sections, each hearing certain types of cases. This would be following the precedent of the high courts of Britain and France. There is nothing particularly revolutionary in the suggestion that the Court might well be enlarged, nor is there anything sacrosanct about the number nine.

There is a lesson to be learned from the Butler proposal. We must not as citizens continually look to the law to save us from our errors in picking the wrong men. If we insist upon hedging about with restrictions the powers that able men may rightly use as the times require, we shall no longer get the able men. Power and responsibility go together.

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The Efficiency Of Violence

THE first time it occurred to me was on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Naturally, as an infidel, I was unable to go as far as the town itself and had to stop on the desert road between the Red Sea port of Jiddah and Mecca. I had arrived in a pilgrim plane from Istanbul with a group of Turks, who made their ritual ablutions in the plane during the flight and said their prayers after having asked the pilot for the exact direction of Mecca. In Jiddah I witnessed the arrival of thousands of pilgrims from all over the Moslem world. To understand how big and how united that world is one must see Mecca during a pilgrimage. There were Indians, Indonesians, Chinese, Persians, Negroes, Morroccans, Egyptians and even pilgrims from nearby Yemen, who danced and yelled like Tarzans as soon as they stepped on the holy soil of Saudi Arabia.

As a Christian I felt myself just tolerated. Some of the returning Turkish pilgrims told me about the fantastic things they had seen and heard: all were equal, wherever they came from and whatever was the color of their face; they were all in the same white pilgrim dress, like soldiers in the same army.

How long had these Turks been Moslems? No doubt for many centuries. To which religion did they belong before they were converted with sword and fire by the soldiers of Mohammed? Quite a number had been Christians—Nestorians. And the other pilgrims with their yellow, brown, black and white faces? I went into the history of Islam. Some of them had belonged to primitive pagan religions, but others, like the Christians, had belonged to highly developed religions, equal or superior to Islam. Practically the only point of history which united them all was that they had been converted rather roughly, more or less by the argument that if you don't want to become a Moslem you will lose your head. These fervent waves of pilgrims I was watching were the result of forcible conversions centuries ago. And for how many centuries to come will they remain Moslem?

There was one other point held in common by all these people: they have proved to be practically immune to Christian proselytism. Christian missionaries are not even tolerated in Saudi Arabia and it probably is just as well; they would almost certainly find that they were wasting their time.

THAT was the first time I was struck by the extraordinary efficiency of violence. The second time was right here in Jerusalem. As I wanted some special information about the case of the dramatic and pathetic *Marranos,* the Spanish Jews forcibly converted to Christianity during the Inquisition, I talked with a Russian-born Jewish professor, a great scholar who is one of the world's foremost specialists on the subject.

Between the Crusades and the Reformation attempts were made in many European countries to convert the Jews. This was carried out on a particularly large scale in Spain, where the Jews had been many and influential since the time of the Moslem rulers. The Moslem offensive in Spain had been met with a Christian counter-offensive and the Moslem population had been successfully and rather brutally converted to Christianity. The Jews remained and were dealt with in very much the same way. They had been given the choice of conversion, or exile or death. This period undoubtedly was one of the darkest pages of the Inquisition. One of the most prominent persecutors of the Jews, Thomas de Torquemada, was of Jewish origin himself, as, strange to say, has often happened whenever Jews have been persecuted.

The old Jewish professor naturally stressed the number of *Marranos* who managed to escape abroad, mainly to the Netherlands where they established flourishing Jewish communities, and the number of those in Spain and Portugal who acted outwardly as Catholics while secretly conserving their ancestral faith. He found that in the first generations after the forcible conversions the women in particular conserved Jewish customs, like the lighting of the Sabbath candles, in spite of the terrible punishments meted out to those who were discovered to have "relapsed." But he admitted that after a couple of generations even these people were lost to Judaism, as the once Christian inhabitants of present-day Turkey are lost to Christianity. Tens of thousands of Jews were thus converted in Spain and Portugal and in many cases became exemplary Catholics. Among them were innumerable priests and monks. According to my source, President Salazar of Portugal, for example, is a descendant of these forcibly converted Jews.

Once more violence had proved its extraordinary efficiency, this time with a people who traditionally have had the strongest attachment to their religion. There are many other historical examples. During the wars of religion the faith of entire countries was decided by the outcome of a battle and then fortified at the point of a sword. The grandsons of a people compelled in agony to embrace a new religion have become steadfast defenders of that same religion. Thus many Catholics were converted to Protestantism and many Protestants converted to Catholicism.

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Christian missions of all denominations are now crumbling in countries like India and China owing to intolerant nationalism and to Communism. The achievements of generations of missionaries, paid for sometimes by their lives, are reduced to nothing almost overnight. One may ask if the descendants of those who have been converted by love are stronger and more steadfast than the descendants of those who have been converted by force. It sometimes seems, indeed, that the opposite is true. Many Catholics are rightly ashamed of the brutal way in which the Indians of Goa were converted by the Portuguese and the Filippinos by the Spaniards, and yet both now are stronger Christian centers than many communities converted by example, conviction, or love.

Naturally I don't mean this to justify conversion by force. I mean to show the extraordinary, diabolically tempting efficiency of force. The temptation stems from a strong conviction that to compel misguided people that two and two *do* make four is simply to open their eyes for their own good—even if it hurts a bit in the beginning. It stems from the same primitive, youthful conviction which once made a Jew of genius, converted to Christianity, utter the following terrible words: tolerance is nothing but the rotten fruit of indifference.

THE extraordinary efficiency of violence has not only been a diabolical temptation of the past; it is the great temptation of our age too, and is all the more alluring as "efficiency" enjoys a prestige it never before had. The great, dynamic pseudo-religion of today, Communism, has succumbed to the temptation of violence and has applied the concept on a scale the soldier-missionaries of Mohammed never dreamt of. Wherever Communism is in power it has been imposed by a minority on a hostile or indifferent majority: in Russia, in the satellite countries, and in China. Like Islam, and sometimes Christianity, it has been imposed as the only alternative to exile or death, and exactly as happened in the past, the indifferent have accepted the new faith out of fear, the surviving anti-Communists have been compelled to embrace the new religion in agony—and their sons and daughters have frequently become its most fanatical defenders.

Naturally this is not achieved overnight. It requires time to cut off the old generation from the new and to indoctrinate the new generation. The Turks used to take male children with them from the conquered Christian lands, educate them to Mohammedanism, and then use them as crack units in the conquest of new Christian lands. They became known and feared under the name "janissaries," which in Turkish means the "new soldiery." In precisely the same way the Communists took children from Spain during the civil war who today are the hard core of the Spanish Communist Party in exile. The Communists did the same thing in the Greek civil war.

There were no mass desertions from the Red Army when first it came in contact with the free world or later as it has remained in contact with the West all along the Iron Curtain. Anyone who has lived in Berlin or Vienna since the war has been struck with the aloofness of the Russian occupation personnel and their families: they are amazingly different, as if they were the inhabitants of another planet, and yet thirty-five years ago they were European Christians exactly as we are today. They are the most ghastly living example of the diabolical efficiency of violence.

The satellite and Chinese peoples have not, of course, reached the same point. The division between the old and new generations is not yet complete; that is why there is a second iron curtain between the USSR and the satellite countries, and why in these countries the children are incited in school to denounce, if necessary, their own parents, which thus compromises the unity of the family. In the USSR, where parents belong to the converted generation, everything is done to strengthen the family as an institution. In the satellite countries and in China the young "janissaries"—Arthur Koestler's "generation without a navel cord"—are only in their teens. What will happen when class after class of them reach the military age? Will an appeasement policy be as convenient to the East then as it is now? And above all will the West withstand the temptation of counter-violence?

For counter-violence is most effective too. So far the only *efficient* instruments against Communism have proved to be Fascism and Nazism—counter-violence. Italian, German and Austrian socialists and even Communists turned Fascist and Nazi in no time, and had Nazism been allowed to live long enough—twelve years is a rather short lifespan—who knows what would have come from *its* young "janissaries"— who as it was, hardly had time to show what they were able to achieve. Violence calls for counter-violence, or as King David said in a famous psalm, "the abyss calls out to the abyss."

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN.

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THE SCREEN

VACATION, ANYONE?

CONTENDERS that movies were much better before talkies seem to win a point with "Mr. Hulot's Holiday." This wonderful little French film has and needs no English subtitles, but it is by no means silent. French and English are spoken occasionally, but the dialogue is so sparse that the whole thing is like pantomime happily assisted by sound effects. "Mr. Hulot's Holiday" is hard to describe. It tells a story that really has no plot, about a group of people, and Mr. Hulot in particular, who spend a vacation at a seaside resort in Brittany. What happens is funny only if you know and like people—because, more than anything else, the film is like a series of amusing and knowing incidents from other movies, or from resort life itself. And the result, without meaning to be so, is almost surrealistic.

As produced, directed, co-authored (with Henri Marquet) and played by Jacques Tati (whom you may have seen depicting the trials of a postman in "Jour de Fête") Mr. Hulot is a sort of French version of Mr. Deeds or Mr. Smith—an overgrown Boy Scout whose heart is as big as the world, but not bigger than his capacity for doing the wrong things at the wrong time in spite of all his good intentions.

"Mr. Hulot's Holiday" is a happy combination of Buster Keaton slapstick with Marx Brothers zaniness. It has old clichés used in a new way and delightful surprises used in an old way. It's as familiar as returning to an old haunt or seeing a favorite film of the past; and it's as unpredictable and refreshing as an ocean breeze. In short, "Mr. Hulot's Holiday" is like taking a holiday.

THE English have also sent over a pleasant little comedy—not something original in the cinematic genre like "Mr. Hulot's Holiday," but a more gentle period piece reminiscent of H. G. Wells when he was writing so charmingly about Kipps and Mr. Polly. "Hobson's Choice," based on Harold Brighouse's comedy, is about a Lancashire bootmaker who is overwhelmed with the problems of marrying off his three daughters. The problems are really of his own making, because he is more interested in money and drinking at the pub than in his daughters' happiness; and his most serious error is in considering his eldest as being shelved: "a bit on the ripe side for marrying." She fools him—but good—first by marrying the rabbity little fellow who actually makes the boots in Hobson's basement, then by redesigning her husband into a man, and then by setting up a business that grabs all of papa's trade.

David Lean, who produced and directed "Hobson's Choice," has given his picture plenty of lively characterizations and a nice turn-of-the-century atmosphere. I wish he could have toned down Charles Laughton a bit in the lead role. During the course of this long picture, the ham gets somewhat thick, but the dialogue is amusing. Brenda de Banzie and John Mills play the daughter and husband roles beautifully; it is this husband-and-wife theme that gives "Hobson's Choice" such a delightful glow.

IF you just cannot resist British movies you may find "Scotch on the Rocks" to your liking. It belongs to that whimsical school which deals with rebellion by a person ("I Know Where I'm Going," "The Captain's Paradise") or by a group of people ("Tight Little Island," "Passport to Pimlico"). Unfortunately this theme has become a rut. "Scotch on the Rocks," adapted from Eric Linklater's novel *Laxdale Hall* and produced by John Grierson, has its amusing moments as the inhabitants of a small Inner Hebrides island are investigated by a delegation from Parliament, but nothing brilliant turns up.

A RECENT Italian import, called "Side Street Story" here and "Napoli Milionaria" there, tries very hard to be one of those slice-of-life movies heavy with social significance. I found it a great bore. It does have several good performances, particularly by Eduardo De Filippo (who also directed the picture and wrote the original stage play) and by Toto. The picture is trying to say that what happened during and after the war to the people on a Neapolitan back street happens to people everywhere. Morals are shot and the family disintegrates; maybe people will assume their dignity again or maybe they won't. Life in Italy, in case you didn't know it, is mighty grim.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

MARITAIN ISSUE

Princeton, N. J.

TO the Editors: I received the issue of The Commonweal [June 11] as an extraordinary, unexpected gift of your friendship and Divine Providence. By prescription of the doctor I can only write a few lines—and many, many lines would not suffice to express my emotion and gratitude. . . . I shall write to James Collins and Monsignor de Menasce. . . . Though certain

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of the words your editorial and Monsignor de Menasce used are of a nature to make a man who knows himself and his nothingness awfully embarrassed, the splendid testimony you gave, with such affection and generosity, to my work in this country is for me a comfort and consolation that I cherish, especially because in actual fact all this work was undertaken out of love for this country. You have given me a new and invaluable token of that great human thing, the admirable American gratitude. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

JACQUES MARITAIN.

"A BISHOP SPEAKS OUT"

Dubuque, Iowa.

TO The Editors: The Commonweal [June 4] carried a letter in which Ed Marciniak attempted to justify his comments on *The Witness* which he originally made in your communications department on May 14.

Since Mr. Marciniak is in a sense the aggressor, I believe that *The Witness* should have an opportunity to answer him.

We again give verbatim Mr. Marciniak's words from his original communication. "*The Witness* (Dubuque, Iowa)," he said, "mentioned the Bishop's talk in a story that also quoted favorable comments about the Senator at the N. Y. communion breakfast."

Mr. Marciniak in his second communication to The Commonweal devoted some forty lines to defending his appraisal of the *Witness* articles. He did not succeed in proving that *The Witness* quoted "favorable comments" about the Senator. He did make the point that we reported that there was much applause. But reporting that there was much applause is not the same thing as "quoting" favorable comments (in the plural).

Mr. Marciniak is a competent writer and would not, we believe, confuse the two except for purposes of controversy. Would he, for example, say that a newspaper account which told of applause at the end of a first night performance "quoted favorable comments about the play?"

We shall not ask The Commonweal for more space to answer Mr. Marciniak's article in greater detail. It is enough at present to say that a fair sample of his controversial method is provided by the fact that he said *The Witness* "quoted"—note that word *quoted*—"favorable comments about the Senator at the New York communion breakfast." He was unable to furnish our "quotations" of such "favorable comments."

His statement is false. Yet he claims that his comment is "strictly factual." In his letter he tried his hand at semantic innovations. Perhaps he will be able to provide a new meaning for "strictly factual."

(*Rt. Rev.*) WILLIAM D. GREEN,
Editor, The Witness.

"SPAIN—1954"

Sunnyside, Wash.

TO the Editors: Mr. Charles H. Lee's article on Spain [June 4] presumes that your readers have not already made the adjustment needed to accept Spain as an ally. Anyone who went along with Russia as an unwelcome-welcome ally, who accepted the fact that we needed Tito in our political warfare and who saw ambassadors cordial with Peron and a few other dictators, is, I think, willing also to let Franco in. What we rebel against is just what Mr. Lee wants us to accept: a version of Spain that is built on illusion.

Only eighteen months ago Spaniards were poorly dressed, as I saw myself; their stores were understocked; road construction was pitifully inadequate and done with pick-ax and shovel; housing was abominable once you got away from the larger cities. If Mr. Lee's eyes saw what he writes, either a miracle, greater than that of Germany, must have happened, or he saw what he wished to see.

As to greater freedom: did we not just read what *Ecclesia* said about censorship? There may be a noticeable mellowing of the regime, but essentially it remains the same. As late as 1952, for example, twenty young men were tried by a military court in secrecy in Catalonia and executed by a firing squad.

To cite the pro-labor record as an evidence for Franco is something that might have fooled us twenty years ago, but not now. We know that Hitler sent millions of workers on cruises and put whole spas at the disposal of his so-called "trade unions." Peron rests his might on the *decamisados*. Russia has been at this game—converting palaces into recreation centers, dotting the Black Sea Riviera with workers' sanatoria and hotels—for thirty years. Is that going to fool anybody? Russia is and remains the arch-enemy of freedom, in spite of her "pro-labor" record.

Nor do I see any freedom in permitting people to grumble in cafes. I hear that Red papers are full of letters to the editor, complaining—except about lack of freedom. How does one find out that "the majority of Spaniards do not desire a change"? They do not have a chance to choose even between order and chaos—and since there is no constitutional way of orderly change, revolution is the only alternative, especially now that the U.S. has backed and financed the system. If they could choose between these two alternatives, of course the Spanish people might choose order, especially with a terrible civil war in their bones! The deal we made with Franco in enlightened national self-interest and without explicit approval of his system is one in which Franco got all the chips. As a matter of fact, we nearly saved him and, shrewd statesman that he is, he drove a bargain bordering on blackmail. The terms, if really discussed here, would make our eyes pop!

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I agree: an exchange of ideas and men is desirable, if our men are aware of the sham front of Spain. I also agree that we have to be realists; Franco is a supreme politician and statesman and unless something goes wrong he is "in" for good. But I maintain that nothing has yet happened to change our attitudes. The pro-Loyalists have belittled Franco, belittled Spain and the Spanish, belittled the atrocities of the Reds when they took over after Franco's rebellion and of the anarchists before it, and thus have been very dishonest. Don't let us simply react in the same way by ignoring the fact that the Spanish deserve a better government and freedom, and that they will only be able to free themselves and develop a stable middle stratum of citizens when the country becomes economically sound, when taxation is made just, when landlordism is finished and when fresh air blows out the foul atmosphere created by corruption, tyranny and dictatorship. Facing these facts would be realism.

I think as far as Mr. Lee's article is a call for realism, we may as well accept the situation. I only object to the implication that "liberals" are stupid enough to follow blindly some party line. We can see who Franco is, and no country is all black from our point of view. In the long run, the apparent disadvantage of our present arrangements with Franco may contribute indirectly, through greater prosperity, to the liberation of the Spanish people on their own terms, achieved by themselves. But to expect such an event by a gradual, intentional watering down of his own system by the Caudillo himself, I consider folly. Besides—has he ever indicated he has any intention of doing this?

(*Rev.*) H. A. REINHOLD.

Mexico City.

TO the Editors: Charles Henry Lee's "Spain 1954" is really incredible. I have no reason to doubt the author's sincerity; I must, however, question his ability as a reporter.

There may well be political and/or military necessities as regards Spanish participation in NATO; Mr. Lee, moreover, is quite correct in pointing out that "the UN blockade was interpreted as a drive against Spain and her people rather than as a world censure of her government"; he rightly states that Franco is a dictator. But he also writes:

1) "Many new buildings are under construction. Older buildings are being modernized." Which? Where? To be sure, Franco did put up a flashy Air Ministry (and where is the air force?). The tourist *albergues* are clean and inexpensive. But what of the thousands of families living in caves not five kilometers from the heart of Madrid?

2) "The stores are well stocked. . . , there is an abundance of food . . ." Simply false. Which is why Mexican CARE-type agencies are doing a boom business in packages to the homeland. And what do these packages contain? Mexican delicacies? No: chick-peas, rice, beans—the staples.

3) Mr. Lee is most impressed by Franco's "physical" achievements, i.e., highways, repair of war damage, industrial production. He concludes: "Whatever one's personal feelings about the events fifteen years ago, such facts in no way point to an impending collapse of the regime." Indeed; but must we endorse a government simply because it appears permanent? And how permanent? I seem to remember that in the past people employed much the same argument to explain Adolph Hitler (*Autobahn, Winterhelf,* and *Wehrmacht*) and, somewhat later, Stalin: the oceans of vodka, the tons of caviar served at the Kremlin; the Dnieper dam; the greatly reduced illiteracy. Hitler is gone; Stalinism will go. The libertarian should have patience.

4) "Spain's shortage of dollars *made* non-official travel well-nigh impossible." (Italics mine). Why the past tense? The peseta is still non-convertible; all normal international business transactions are ruled out as of 1954; even such a palpably inoffensive person as Augustin Lara, a Mexican band leader, had to post twenty-five thousand dollars bond that his tour of Spain would be non-profit.

5) "Artists and intellectuals of present-day Spain are now visiting other countries . . . [There is] an atmosphere of intellectual and cultural revival." This is the most absurd of Mr. Lee's statements. No intellectuals are visiting other countries because Spain has none. Lorca died in the war, shot by a Falange goon-squad. Falla died afterward, in exile, in Buenos Aires. Casals is in France. The noted philosophers Garcia Baca, Nicol, Gaos, Xirau are in Mexico. As is the music critic Salazar. I defy Mr. Lee to name these intellectuals who find Franco Spain congenial to creative effort. . . .

ERIC LEE. (no kin)

REPLY

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I should like to emphasize that my recent article had only one purpose: to raise the question of whether or not the time had come to re-examine our non-governmental relationship with Spain and her people. It was my contention that such a re-valuation was overdue and my hope and expectation that my remarks would provoke the commencement of the discussion this would necessitate. Therefore, I am neither surprised nor disappointed by Father Reinhold and Mr. Eric Lee's (no kin) letters.

Both these letters reflect the all too frequent error that I referred to in my article: that to say something good about Spain implies indorsement of the regime. My article was never intended to be, nor was it, a

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defense of the Franco regime, since I do not sympathize with dictatorial governments whether of the Malenkov, Tito or any other variety. However, to present the Spanish picture properly, I had to describe present day conditions in Spain, which are different than those in 1939 and even different from what they were in 1949. This led to the conclusion that Spain today is not a totalitarian dictatorship of the Russian or Nazi character; that considerable material progress has been made; that although political freedom is nonexistent, a degree of improvement in informational and intellectual freedom has developed, still far from satisfactory by our standards; and that Spain is a very poor country, with few resources and limited economic prospects. Moreover, that the people of Spain are friendly to the U. S. and our people. This feeling is obvious to anyone who visits that country today. . . .

I am truly sorry to find myself in apparent disagreement with Father Reinhold, whose writings I admire, and I cannot help but feel that he has read unwarranted implications into my language and that if we had the opportunity of talking things over we would find ourselves in accord. He says that I want us to accept a version of Spain that is built on illusion. On the contrary, I adhered strictly to facts and one of those facts is a definite improvement in living conditions, but obviously, this must be relative. As of today the stores are well stocked with merchandise and the people are not starving, but naturally the millenium has not arrived and this improvement must be viewed in the light of Spain's possibilities and recent conditions. True that roads are for the most part built and repaired with pick-ax and shovels and homes are constructed with primitive tools to a great extent, but this is so because Spain is an extremely poor country, and therefore the Spanish people are the more to be admired, for a great deal of roadbuilding and repairing is being carried on. I am sure that a great deal of housing is required, but a substantial number of workers' houses are being constructed both in large cities like Malaga, Barcelona, Madrid, as also in small country places whose names would mean nothing to us. In neighboring France the reverse is true, but must we blame this condition there on Democracy?

Father Reinhold says that I have cited Franco's pro-labor record as evidence for Franco. This is simply not the case and I cannot understand how he drew this conclusion. I said that the regime has made a tangible bid for this segment of society. Its reason for so doing may quite possibly be the same as was the case in Nazi Germany or Peron's Argentina.

People do more than grumble in cafes in Spain, and I regret that Commonweal's space requirements compelled the curtailment of my full remarks on this point, because I cited a concrete and interesting example, which I personally witnessed recently. A prominent government official concerned with informational matters publicly indicted Spanish intellectuals—past and present—for all Spain's ills. A representative group of intellectual leaders decided that this attack must be answered. A strong reply was formulated but there was much concern as to whether publication would be permitted. It was!

Father Reinhold then goes on to refer to our Government's "deal" with Franco and how "he got all the chips, etc." This statement, I feel, is entirely gratuitous and a serious indictment of our Government which requires proof before acceptance.

Finally, when Father Reinhold voices the hope that greater contact with the Spanish people themselves may lead eventually to greater freedom and increased well-being for them, he is indeed pleading my cause, the real motive and objective of my article: greater contact and communication with and sympathy for the *Spanish people* and not their regime.

To Mr. Eric Lee, I would say the following:

1. Hundreds of buildings *are* being constructed or modernized in Bilbao, Barcelona, Malaga, Madrid, Zaragossa, anywhere he cares to look. I deplore the caves as much as he does, but this, unfortunately, has been going on for generations.

2. The stores *are* well stocked and there *is* an abundance of food. Obviously, this statement is relative to Spain and not to our own country. He says my statement is false. I would merely say that he is inaccurately informed since apparently he has not been in Spain recently.

3. As to Franco's physical achievements, they were not cited with admiration but merely as they reflect the regime's stability and relative permanence, which factors must be taken into account in any evaluation of the Spanish situation.

4. Non-official travel out of Spain *has* increased, even though the peseta is not freely convertible—as is also the case with a great number of "Democratic currencies." What he means by the fact that all normal international business transactions are out as of 1954, I don't know. It appears simply as another inaccurate statement with no basis whatsoever.

5. I am sorry that Mr. E. Lee, who obviously is an admirer of intellectuals, should denounce so bitterly the idea of the existence of a true intellectual group in Spain. I *never said* that they found the Franco regime congenial to creative effort. My plea was and is for greater contact with this segment of Spanish life. I don't know what his definition of intellectuals includes, but if he means enlightened men of integrity, whose ideas I am certain would be welcome in The Commonweal, such men do exist in present day Spain, just to cite a few: Zubiri, Risruejo, Aranguren, Marias, Diez del Corral, Lain, Gironella. . . .

CHARLES HENRY LEE.

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Spinning Literature Out of Old Lead

AROUND THEATERS By Max Beerbohm. Simon and Schuster. $6.

By WALTER F. KERR

IT seems to me that all the rest of us who don't write as well as Max Beerbohm have worked out two ways of dealing with the gentleman. The first way is to call him Max; everyone calls him Max. This, in effect, throws one arm about him and clubbily makes him one of us. He ought, of course, to have been called Mr. Beerbohm.

The second way is to call him 'the incomparable Max,' as the publishers do on the jacket of *Around Theaters*. 'Incomparable' is, in this instance, a most felicitous adjective. It removes Mr. Beerbohm from the world of competitive letters; and it relieves the rest of us from competing with him, from being measured by his standards. Justice really demands that Mr. Beerbohm be called Comparable, that he *be* compared to all those who practice or have practiced in his field, and that he be given the benefit of the difference.

The comparable Mr. Beerbohm, then, was a comic fantasist of the first order. He was also, for a time and for no very good reason, a drama critic. *Around Theaters* is, on the surface of things, a compilation of his weekly criticism for *The Saturday Review* (on which he succeeded Shaw) from 1898 to 1910.

But the surface is slightly misleading. Mr. Beerbohm did not mean to be a critic. He was not partial to the theater, as he made plain in his initial piece, "Why I Ought Not to Have Become a Dramatic Critic." When his twelve-year acquaintance with the profession was over, he did not think he would miss the theater; he thought only that he might miss those apprehensive Thursdays on which he sat down to write his copy. It was the copy he loved.

This is not to imply, not even for a paragraph, that he was not a good critic. He saw the danger inherent in the drama of ideas before the drama of ideas had fully caught hold ("the chances are that the creature has been built primarily as a mouth-piece"). He wrote the last word on Shaw before Shaw had got his second wind. ("I care not that he is in his forty-fifth year; he is, I assure you, a young writer; he is still in an early state of development . . . he was not born to write serious plays. He has too irresponsible a sense of humor. This sense he never could have suppressed so utterly as to prevent it from marring his plays; and, as it is his greatest gift, one does not wish him to suppress it at all.") He liked "Peter Pan" and forever affixed the Barrie who wrote it to the nursery wall. "The Passing of the Third Floor Back" did not pass unscathed.

But accuracy, except on a week-to-week basis, is of no great worth in a critic. I may demand that a reviewer be reasonably right if I am going to depend upon him for tomorrow night's show; fifty years later nothing could interest me less. "The Third Floor Back" has gone to limbo; Beerbohm's distaste for it no longer stands as a necessary corrective. "Peter Pan" is still very much with us; Beerbohm's liking for it cannot increase my own. The fact that Beerbohm was right about "Peter Pan" is no more important now than that Shaw was wrong about "The Importance of Being Earnest." One does not re-read a critic for his shrewdness.

One may re-read him for his evocative power, for the strength with which he conjures up images of long dead Duses. Mr. Beerbohm is superb here, too, and we are moving closer to his genius. There is a portrait of Irving on the way to being knighted that is as vivid as a Cruikshank sketch; there is a review of Bernhardt's autobiography that must, I am dead certain, have more of the Bernhardt tang than the book does. But even this level of reviewing demands an antiquarian interest on the part of the reader. I must care about Irving before I care to pick up the commentator.

What keeps Beerbohm in print and the reader in first-time rapture (the present collection was made in 1924, reprinted in America in 1930, and is now offered in new dress on both sides of the Atlantic) is not the critic's subtleties of judgment; neither is it his talent as a painter of relics. It is his joy in language (a joy which the theater of his time rarely offered him and which he had to satisfy out of his own resources); it is his joy in satiric invention (the most enchanting pieces in the book arrive tardily at the play; the critic has been too busy imagining alternative plots, characters, or even authors for it); it is his joy in creating something new and lively out of nominal materials that were frequently old and more frequently dead.

The play is rarely Mr. Beerbohm's inspiration. It is, if anything, his irritant. He does not filch vitality from a stimulating playwright, as most reviewers do; he does not rely on the dazzle of a radiant personality to enliven his description of a performance. He adds always a third thing: himself, his delight in the fact that his brain is fertile, his determination to change the subject and to change it into something tasty. He does not use an unimaginative play as a target for wisecracks; he uses it as a stepping-stone to something imaginative. Thus a review of Basil Hood's "My Pretty Maid" is less than a review and more than a catalogue of invective; it becomes a droll and deadpan fancy in which a nonexistent dramatist, one Miss Evie Simpson, is guided toward commercial success. In the process of spinning literature out of old lead Mr. Beerbohm passes gracefully beyond the critical task and exuberantly embraces the creative.

That is why I think Simon and Schuster are misguided in their effort to lure us toward Beerbohm by assuring us, on the dust jacket, that we are about to attend, with 'the Incomparable Max,' the "opening nights of 'Peter Pan,' of 'Justice,' of

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'The Passing of the Third Floor Back.'" Vague memories of a thousand plays can only make Beerbohm as dusty as they are. He never did need them, and he doesn't now. Better the publishers had skipped the scholarly appeal and told the truth. They might, for instance, have used "Wonderfully funny, wonderfully fresh" without embarrassment.

'Moyenageux'

THE GOOSE ON THE GRAVE: Two Short Novels. By John Hawkes. New Directions. $3.

By VIVIAN MERCIER

"FIFTEEN-love, and the game's tennis," a friend of mine used to say. It always struck me as a very profound remark. In literature, as in sport, one should always know not merely what the score is but what game is being played. Dante put the same idea into rather different words in *Il Convivio* when discussing the four different ways of understanding a book—the Literal, the Allegorical, the Moral and the Mystical:

> But in demonstrating these, the Literal must always go first, as that in whose sense the others are included, and without which it would be impossible and irrational to understand the others. Especially is it impossible in the Allegorical, because in each thing which has a within and a without, it is impossible to come to the within if you do not first come to the without.

"The Owl," the first of the two novels under review, left me so unsatisfied at the Literal level that I postponed any inquiry into the Allegorical one until I had gone off and read Mr. Hawkes' two previous books, *The Cannibal* (1949) and *The Beetle Leg* (1951), to see if the praise of them quoted on the new volume's wrapper had any justification. Well, it has.

The Cannibal is a busy little book about an imaginary German town in 1945 and 1914. A strange mingling of realism and surrealism, it herds a bunch of comic-strip Germans through some sharply visualized, though unreal, horrors. Nowadays, everything that makes no sense realistically is reputed to be symbolic, so that comparisons to Kafka were tossed around freely by Albert J. Guerard in his introduction to the book. The difference between Mr. Hawkes and Kafka is fairly easily defined: Kafka takes basically simple imagined situations and gives them multiple and complex symbolic meanings; Mr. Hawkes' situations are complex, but his meanings—those that reach this reader, anyway—are fundamentally sophomoric; furthermore, Kafka is much more understandable and believable at the Literal level.

The Beetle Leg, a comic-strip Western, represents a great improvement on *The Cannibal.* As in many of Faulkner's books, the reader feels that he, an outsider, has been allowed to sit in on one of those interminable conversations that apparently flow on year after year in hotel lobbies, saloons and courthouses all over the South and West. None of the speakers ever feels the need to stop and explain anything, for the facts and the persons involved have been familiar to them all their lives. If the Easterner keeps his mouth shut, he may eventually get the hang of about half of what is going on.

The Beetle Leg, which I hope to re-read soon, has some of Al Capp's grotesque, wry humor, but in "The Owl" we are plunged into the humorless cliché-world spawned by the anonymous illustrators of horror comic books. The narrator and central figure is an executioner—tall and thin, inevitably — who domineers over a vertical, elaborate, impossibly medieval Italian hill town. Wedded to his gallows, he carries out an execution and fails to take a wife. The French have a contemptuous word, *moyenageux,* which perfectly describes the story's phony medievalism. After reading Mr. Hawkes' other books, I still remain indifferent to the Allegorical significance of "The Owl," if it has any.

"The Goose on the Grave," the slightly longer of the two stories, eludes me even at the Literal level; this is infuriating to one who considers himself a practiced and sensitive reader, so perhaps it is impossible for me to be fair. Here, at any rate, are a number of moderately vivid scenes of a war-time Italy, mostly viewed through the eyes of a motherless boy, Adeppi; certain characters appear, disappear, reappear, but their motivation has to be supplied by the reader as they fight, sing, pray and die. Mr. Hawkes seems to be deliberately covering up all the clues to motive that other novelists would sprinkle around.

Three things *The Beetle Leg* has which these new stories have not. First, it unfolds in a vernacular that, like Faulkner's, may *somewhere* have been spoken *by* somebody *to* somebody; "The Owl," which has a straightforward enough story line, is undone by rhetoric; the novel form, after all, has been colloquial, not rhetorical, since its seventeenth and eighteenth century beginnings. Second, *The Beetle Leg* contains within its covers all we need to know about its people, though mingled with much that is irrelevant, and scattered in a disorder which we, as readers, have to set in order; "The Goose on the Grave," however, leaves me with the feeling that the author is holding out on me somewhere, as Stendhal failed to inform his readers that the hero of his *Armance* was impotent. Third, there is something in *The Beetle Leg* worth knowing, for the dead man buried under the dam, both as an individual human being and as a symbol, offers an unknown territory that we are happy to explore. I suggest Mr. Hawkes back-track to where he was when he wrote *The Beetle Leg* and start afresh.

The Gloomy Dane

SOREN KIERKEGAARD. By Johannes Hohlenberg. Translated by T. H. Croxall. Pantheon. $5.

By JAMES V. MULLANEY

THIS biography was published in Danish in 1940, translated into German in 1948, and is now made available in English by a translator who is himself a Kierkegaard scholar. This translation is really a work of collaboration between Messrs. Hohlenberg and Croxall. The au-

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thor worked with the translator in his task, and the translator added almost all of the four hundred footnotes. These notes are largely source references for the quotations included; references which the Danish original does not contain. There is a serviceable bibliography of Kierkegaard's English titles, and of books about Kierkegaard in English, together with a splendid index.

All of the now widely-known events in the life of Kierkegaard are examined here by a Dane, himself the son of a minister. The strange family background with its "broodiness," its insanities, its suicides; the ubiquitous Regine; the rebellion against Hegel; the *Corsair* incident; the attack on the Danish Lutheran Church; the early death — these outer events are all detailed. So are the inner attitudes: the involuted, studied, self-consciousness; the refusal to be simple; the harsh either-ors imposed on others by this dialectician whose own ambivalence on every crucial issue is torturous; the mere cleverness alongside the undoubted genius; the low, bad taste of some of the criticism of opponents, alongside the absolute commitment to God. For good and bad, it is a man, and therefore a very mixed being, who emerges from these pages.

The biographer's approach, explained in his first chapter, is quaint. It is the methodological postulate that a man like Kierkegaard determines by his very character what the events of his life shall be. This arresting postulate betrays the biographer into silliness only once. That is when he pictures the unborn, and presumably unconceived, Kierkegaard carefully selecting his parents and his total milieu including financial independence—even to whispering to his father to hold onto certain government bonds. "So therefore, when at last he had convinced himself that everything was ready, and that both the material and the spiritual weapons he would use were at hand and secure, he waited no longer, but let himself be born. . . ." The only other position adopted by Mr. Hohlenberg which startled this reviewer is the suggestion that the marriage between Soren's parents may have occurred as a consequence of rape. Now it is true that the senior Kierkegaard was married twice, there being no issue of the first union; that the second marriage took place before the then customary year of mourning was complete; that the first child of that second union was born about five months after the marriage; and that the second Mrs. Kierkegaard had been a servant in the Kierkegaard household until her marriage. It would seem sufficient to report these facts for what they may be worth in explaining the life and mind of Soren (he was not the first, but the last, child) without engaging in any bizarre speculations.

This biographer is not always sufficiently detached from his subject. He tends at times to justify Kierkegaard, instead of letting him emerge on his own. Thus a whole chapter is devoted to refuting the charge that Kierkegaard was financially irresponsible. There are, of course, two kinds of detachment from a person. One is the detachment of indifference, springing from a complete lack of love. The other springs from robust love — love that acknowledges faults in the beloved because it bathes and redeems them, so far as human love may, in compassion. This second detachment goes far beyond the loyalty that merely excuses and justifies, for it admits the existence of the inexcusable and the unjustifiable, and still loves. One is happy that Mr. Hohlenberg has nothing of the first detachment, but not so happy that he does not always have the second.

This book complements rather than replaces Walter Lowrie's *Kierkegaard*. It joins a long list of splendid books published by Pantheon.

Anti-Religion

RELIGION BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN. By George N. Shuster. Macmillan. $4.

By N. S. TIMASHEFF

"OPERATION anti-religion" has been one of the major enterprises of the Communists, both in the Soviet Union and in the satel-

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lite states. The main phases of that operation, as well as of the resistance of the believers, are well told in Dr. Shuster's book. But the author only deals with the satellites and the former Baltic states, while the story of religious persecution in the Soviet Union proper is taken for granted. Perhaps the author was right in thus limiting his task since a rather extensive literature exists on religion in Soviet Russia.

Nevertheless this omission has deprived the author of the opportunity to use certain perspectives which might have clarified the subject of his choice. First, the activities of the Communists in the satellites have been largely based on experience accumulated during the long years of religious persecution in Russia. There they learned that the classic methods of persecution, violence and blasphemy are double-edged swords, and that a really effective program must consist (1) of discontinuing religious education and replacing it by anti-religious education; (2) of the deprivation of religious organizations of all functions except divine service in church buildings; and (3) of the imposition, on religious leaders, of statements, sometimes even deeds, diminishing their prestige among the flock.

A comparison with events in the Soviet Union proper would also have made obvious certain differences. To the disadvantage of the anti-religious aggressors was the fact that the majority of the population of the satellites belongs to the supra-national Catholic Church while the majority of the population of Russia belongs to the national Russian Church; while the latter could be subjugated by pressure on its center, in the satellites the Communists found themselves with an insoluble task—to persuade the Catholics to form national Catholic churches free of ties with the Vatican. Only a few renegades have yielded to that pressure, whereas the government, again in the light of the Russian experience, did not find it opportune to apply mass terrorism to those who remained faithful. (Incidentally the author makes several mistakes when speaking of the Eastern Churches. The Bulgarian schismatics never found themselves under the jurisdiction of the Royal Greek Church, and, during the period under study, the Rumanian Church never was under the jurisdiction of Constantinople.)

On the other hand, in the major part of the satellites the Communists found a great advantage in the fact that, prior to the Communists' ascent to power, the religious organizations largely depended on state subsidies which had not been the case in Russia. Therefore, in addition to direct intimidation, in the satellites the Communists could use as an instrument of persuasion the threat of starving the clergy.

Of course, all these facts and hundreds of others are told in Dr. Shuster's book, which lets the reader travel from East Germany to Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary, the Baltic states and the Balkans. The book is written with great sincerity and sympathy for the victims of "operation anti-religion" and is notable for the author's art

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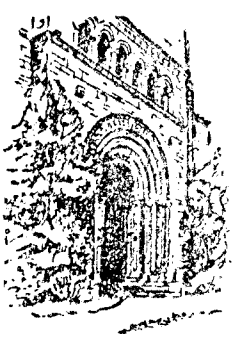

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of selecting, out of innumerable facts, just those which are typical and essential for the understanding of the rather complicated developments.

Greener Grass

A WREATH FOR THE ENEMY. By Pamela Frankau. Harper. $3.50.

By DORIS GRUMBACH

THIS is a curious chameleon of a novel. It has a simple-declarative-sentence sort of story to begin with, and then halfway through it changes shape and color, inexplicably, into the impressionistic kind of narrative which now is established enough to be almost dated. This sea change is extended to the treatment of its characters as well as the plot itself; persons whose minds have hitherto presented themselves in logical terms are, by the same alchemy, suddenly catapulted into near-unintelligibility and irrationality. This red-sea division in presentation diminishes the force and point of what is, clearly, a novel of serious intent. One finds oneself regretting the author's unaccountable switch, especially since there is every indication in this latest novel by the author of the impressive *The Willow Cabin* that a warm and genuine sympathy with Catholicism has entered her work.

The story begins with a commonplace paradox: children raised in complete bohemian freedom yearn for the restrictions of a highly organized and proper life, and of course, the other way round. Here the "Smugs" are young Don and Eva Bradley who live their orderly English lives next door to poet Francis Wells' unconventional French Riviera hotel. His daughter Penelope watches their games, their careful, hourly progress from activity to activity, and desires ardently to be part of it all. Her inner conflict is resolved from without; a strange old woman, the Duchess, dies at the hotel, but not before she has taught Penelope some mordant lessons in the use and value of personal freedom. And for Don and Eva,

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whose glimpse into Penelope's life has made them envious, there is an instrument of instruction too — a cripple named Crusoe who spouts philosophy in the form of quotable aphorisms.

So far one can travel with Miss Frankau's people and their situations. But dissolution sets in at this point. Crusoe's character, which always seemed confused and synthetic, is bolstered by his friends, a group of purposive exotics which includes a comfortably social Monsignor, a half-mad former Commando, and a pure Scott Fitzgerald sister-in-law who achieved self-realization through a curiously absolute method: she ignites her own hand. Miss Frankau would have us accept these oddities as legitimate representatives of British aristocracy, and perhaps they are, but they bring only chaos to the novel's central point. By using them Miss Frankau has substituted for vertical characterization her talent for bright, darting conversation, and so the people dissolve into talk, good talk true, but still just talk.

Some real values are fished out. Don, after Crusoe's early and tragic death, chooses the priesthood, although one wishes his reasons for his choice did not remain in the mists evoked by the general unreality. Penelope makes an act of love and renunciation and begins her career as a writer, indicating to the young priest that her search for "the top of the hill . . . the Glory of God. . . ." is also just beginning. But this quiet unity of aim comes, for the reader, too late. We have been, so to speak, too long in the carnival to find an answer in the chapel.

REVIEWERS

Walter F. Kerr, playwright, director, and drama critic for the New York *Herald Tribune*, was formerly drama critic for this magazine.

Vivian Mercier, critic and anthologist, teaches at the City College of New York and at Columbia.

James V. Mullaney is chairman of the humanities program at Manhattan College.

N. S. Timasheff is a member of the Russian Institute at Fordham.

Doris Grumbach is a critic who has frequently contributed to The Commonweal.

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